

Westfield Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	117270
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	379384
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2012
Lead inspector	Norma Ball

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Abraham
Headteacher	Diane Ashmore
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2006
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Norma Ball

Additional inspector

Gillian Bosschaert

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed a range of small teaching groups withdrawn from classes. A total of seven teachers were observed, and short observations were made of learning support assistants teaching small groups. Inspectors made visits to classes to look at displays and observe individual pupils and groups at work, and to listen to pupils read. They met with parents and carers during the inspection. Meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils also took place. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and scrutinised samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, and documentation relating to management, curriculum and safeguarding. In addition, the inspectors took account of responses to questionnaires from 78 parents and carers, 26 staff and 101 pupils.

Information about the school

Westfield is smaller than the average primary school. A large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is above average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. Each year a high number of pupils join or leave the school at different times through the year. There is one Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for the pupils' level of attainment.

The school has achieved the Active Mark and National Healthy School status. The Westfield Pre-School shares the school site but is not managed by the governing body and is subject to separate inspection. A specially resourced provision for special educational needs also shares the school site. Known as the Primary Support Base, it provides support for four pupils with social and emotional difficulties from Westfield and for a small number of pupils from other local primary schools, as well as an outreach service to schools. The deputy headteacher and inclusion manager have been in post since the beginning of 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	4
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- The school is not satisfactory because all groups of pupils make too little progress in English and mathematics, and the steps taken to remedy this are fragile and not yet effective. Leaders and managers do not monitor the quality of teaching sufficiently regularly or rigorously, and take too little account of the impact of teaching on pupils’ performance. Their evaluation of the school’s effectiveness is over-optimistic, and the development points identified at the time of the last inspection have not been remedied.
- Pupils’ attainment is average but their progress, especially in Key Stage 2, is inadequate. At class level, assessment information is not used effectively enough to ensure all pupils achieve well. Opportunities are missed to develop pupils’ key skills, especially their numeracy skills, through different subjects.
- The quality of teaching is not good enough, especially in Key Stage 2, and expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. In reading, progress is hindered by reading books that do not challenge pupils enough. Targets are not a regular focus of lessons, and pupils are unclear about the progress they have made or the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and say they feel safe, but there are too many occurrences of unacceptable behaviour. Pupils have a good awareness of other faiths and cultures, especially within the school community, but the school does not do enough to develop their social and moral awareness and some pupils show a lack of respect for others.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels accelerate school improvement by:
 - regularly and rigorously monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' outcomes, and using the results to improve pupils' achievement
 - improving pupils' social and moral development consistently across the curriculum and eliminating the elements of unacceptable behaviour.
- Improve achievement in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is used sharply to identify underachievement, especially in Key Stage 2, and providing effective support to accelerate pupils' progress
 - ensuring pupils' reading books are well matched to their reading ability in order to improve their reading skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching so it is good or better across the school by:
 - ensuring all lessons provide tasks that are closely matched to pupils' ability to improve the progress they make
 - setting clear targets that are regularly referred to in lessons and discussed and reviewed frequently with pupils, so they understand exactly what they need to do to reach the next stage in their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is inadequate and inspection findings show that pupils make too little progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 in key areas of learning. Children enter the Reception Year with skills and understanding broadly at the levels expected nationally for their age. They make a satisfactory start in most areas of learning, but do well in their social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. A careful focus on blending sounds to match letters and encouragement to enjoy stories and books support the development of early reading and writing skills.

In Key Stage 1 pupils' progress in reading is limited because the books are often too easy for them, so they read them quickly and are not sufficiently challenged to improve the progress they make in reading. In 2011, teacher assessments in reading for Year 2 pupils indicated that attainment was average, but the school's current tracking data indicate a few pupils have made inadequate or no progress in reading in the current academic year.

This problem continues into Key Stage 2 and the school's own records indicate that one-sixth of pupils underachieve in reading. Strategies to help pupils to improve their writing through discussion and developing ideas, and to improve their number skills

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through problem-solving, are integrated throughout the school but are not yet showing signs of improving achievement.

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were pleased with the progress their children were making, and all indicated that their children enjoyed school. This view is not supported by inspection evidence because significant groups of pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, make inadequate progress and are not fulfilling their academic potential. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has fluctuated in recent years. In 2011 it was average overall, but this conceals underachievement by groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The lessons observed, pupils' books seen during the inspection and the school's own assessment information demonstrate that the progress made by pupils is inconsistent and a significant proportion of pupils have made no measurable progress since the beginning of the autumn term. In the current Year 6, over half of all pupils have made no progress in writing, over a quarter have made no progress in reading, and nearly a half have made no progress in mathematics. Progress shows signs of improving in English for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, but not in mathematics because the support provided is not sufficiently well structured and so ineffective. Pupils who join the school at different times settle quickly and their progress is sometimes good but inconsistent overall. Pupils in the Primary Support Unit make satisfactory progress. Progress for pupils who speak English as an additional language has been improved by the use of laptop computers to help with translations.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is inadequate because expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sufficiently high and pupils make too little progress. During the inspection inadequate teaching was seen in several lessons, most notably in Key Stage 2. Almost all parents and carers and most pupils who replied to the questionnaire are pleased with the quality of teaching. The school's monitoring of lessons also indicates that teaching is good. This view does not accord with inspection evidence. Teaching is monitored on a termly basis by the headteacher and some observations are undertaken by the deputy headteacher and subject leaders for English and mathematics. However, this monitoring is not sufficiently evaluative, does not consistently identify or follow-up with staff how and where teaching can be improved, and takes insufficient account of pupils' outcomes.

The teachers encourage pupils to assess the quality of their work and what they have understood in the lesson. However, the tasks planned for pupils lack challenge and this has a serious impact on their progress. In a literacy lesson for older pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, pupils made inadequate progress because the pace of the lesson was too slow and the activity to improve one sentence in a variety of ways did not challenge them. Some pupils became distracted because they were not motivated by the very limited repetitive task. Targets are set for ability groups in

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English and mathematics but most pupils, when asked, do not know their targets. These are not closely focused on in all lessons, or discussed and reviewed frequently with pupils, so pupils are unaware of what they are expected to know or learn next. One-fifth of the pupils who replied to the questionnaire said they did not know how well they were doing. The marking of pupils' work is regular and careful but does not consistently make clear how and where they can improve a piece of work, especially in mathematics. Opportunities are missed to consolidate and extend pupils' skills, especially their mathematical skills, when they are working in different subjects. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, satisfactory teaching enables pupils to settle quickly and enjoy the appropriate range of well-resourced activities that cover all areas of their learning well. The Pupil Support Unit provides carefully planned support to meet the behavioural needs of a small number of pupils from Westfield and other local schools.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers and pupils indicated in their responses to the questionnaire that they had significant concerns about the standards of behaviour in the school. Inspection evidence substantiated these concerns. The school's own records reflect a number of incidents of aggressive behaviour and bullying, including a recent racist incident. Inspectors consulted a number of pupils about behaviour and bullying. One pupil in Key Stage 1 captured pupils' feeling well in saying that other pupils 'call you things sometimes and it makes me feel very sad.' Name-calling episodes were also confirmed by older pupils and result in the recipient feeling vulnerable and hurt. Pupils know that they can report incidents of poor behaviour, and the pastoral support worker records and discusses incidents of poor behaviour with pupils. The school's behaviour code is clear with progressive sanctions, but is not effective in tackling poor behaviour.

There has been a recent focus on improving behaviour but reinforcement of pupils' social and moral development through the curriculum is underdeveloped and some pupils fail to see how their actions affect others. Pupils showed positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour in most of the lessons observed, although they sometimes became inattentive, especially when learning tasks were not stimulating.

In the Primary Support Unit staff work effectively to help pupils improve their behaviour and move towards reintegration into their schools. Pupils who attend the breakfast club also behave well and socialise happily before the start of school. Attendance is average but, despite the school's diligence in seeking to improve attendance, a few families do not assign a high enough priority to attending promptly and regularly. Pupils feel safe in the school, which has the necessary policies and procedures to ensure this continues.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are inadequate. Despite some recent actions to address

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weaknesses and improve achievement for all pupils, the areas for development identified in the previous inspection have not been addressed effectively, and improving the quality of teaching and use of assessment data remain priorities for the school. The tracking system introduced in 2011 to monitor pupils' progress has identified some areas of underachievement, but it is not securely embedded and is largely ineffective. New strategies to improve attainment in English and mathematics have been led enthusiastically by the subject leaders but are not yet showing clear signs of improving pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 2.

The impact of strategic planning is limited because, although accurate areas for improvement are identified, the monitoring of developments lacks precision and rigour. This is especially true of teaching, where it has failed to take account of the outcomes for pupils and how teaching can be improved to meet the needs of all groups more effectively. The governing body, senior leaders and managers share an ambition to improve the school but have too generous a view of its effectiveness. All these weaknesses mean that the school's capacity to improve is inadequate.

Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are supported by clear policies and procedures, and regular training for staff. The school seeks to provide an inclusive environment in which all pupils are treated fairly. However, some pupils are subjected to aggressive and bullying behaviour and as a result their experience of school is not a happy one. The manager of the Primary Support Unit has regular meetings with the headteacher and links between this provision and other schools are good.

The curriculum does not support pupils' personal or academic development well enough. It makes a suitable contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Other faiths and cultures, particularly those within the school community, are valued. However, positive moral and social skills are not promoted well enough, as shown by the behaviour shown by some pupils who do not recognise the need to treat others fairly and kindly. A broad range of experiences for pupils of all ages is enhanced by an appropriate variety of visits, visitors and school clubs to enrich learning beyond the classroom. Links are developing between subjects to make learning more interesting for pupils, and to provide an avenue for further development of their basic skills, but these are not systematically planned or monitored well enough to support the drive to improve pupils' achievement.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westfield Community Primary School, Hoddesdon, EN11 8RA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing how you work in lessons, hearing your views and reading the questionnaires some of you completed. We shared in your assembly when you were recalling the visits you had been on and visitors, such as the Indian dancer, who had come to the school.

As a result of our inspection, we have judged that your school is not providing you with an acceptable standard of education. Some important things about the school are not good enough. We have talked about this with the headteacher and the governing body, and have identified three things for them to focus on.

- We have asked leaders and managers to check carefully on lessons to make sure that teaching is consistently good, and to help ensure that all of you know that unkind and bullying behaviour is not acceptable.
- To help you make better progress in English and mathematics we have asked the teachers to give special help to those who are falling behind in their learning, and to make sure your reading books are not too easy.
- We have asked the teachers to increase the pace in lessons by planning tasks that make you think hard so that you do the very best work you can. We have also asked them to involve you in setting and reviewing your targets regularly, and to refer to the targets in lessons so you understand how well you are doing and what you still need to learn.

You can help by working hard and always being kind and considerate to other pupils. It was a pleasure to visit Westfield and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball
Lead inspector

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